



Hickory Public Schools

Week in Review

May 8, 2017

“A snapshot of HPS good news”

Thursday Rotary Club of Hickory names Teacher of the Year

At the May 4 meeting of the Thursday Rotary Club of Hickory, Rotarian David Moore announced the 2017 Wilmer Jenkins Teacher of the Year for the Hickory Public Schools. The award is given annually in memory of Wilmer M. Jenkins, who served as superintendent of Hickory Public Schools from July 1, 1958 – June 30, 1967 and was a member and past president of the Thursday Rotary Club of Hickory.

This year the selection committee chose Madison Yount, who teaches English at Hickory High School. Yount is a product of the Hickory Public School system and a graduate of Hickory High School. She received a Bachelor of Arts in English and a Master of Arts in Teaching from Lenoir-Rhyne University. She is also the adviser of Interact and the National English Honor Society.

“This year, as every year, we know full well that the winner is not here with us today,” said Kathy Greathouse, chair of the Wilmer Jenkins Teacher of the Year selection committee. “The winners — all 4,200 of them — are studying at desks in schools across our city. With you today are the inspiring teachers who are changing their lives in profound ways.”



Shown (from left) are Caitlin Norton, Janice Walker, Diane Urtel, Madison Yount, Christina Lancaster, Jason Stephens, Tony Crouch, Jessica Johnson and Elizabeth Rollins.

Teachers nominated for this year's award were Tony Crouch, Firefighting Technologies Academy instructor at Hickory Career Arts and Magnet School; Jessica Johnson, second-grade teacher at Jenkins Elementary School; Christina Lancaster, sixth- and seventh-grade math and science teacher at Grandview Middle School; Caitlin Norton, kindergarten teacher at Viewmont Elementary School; Elizabeth Rollins, pre-k teacher at Southwest Elementary School; Jason Stephens, chorus teacher for grades six, seven and eight and coach at

Northview Middle School; Diane Urtel, Exceptional Children teacher at Oakwood Elementary School; Janice Walker, fourth-grade teacher at Longview Elementary School; and Yount.

Each nominee received a plaque and a check for \$500, and the Teacher of the Year received \$1,000.

These donations are made possible by the Thursday Rotary Club of Hickory's successful fund-raising activities, including the annual Rotarian Idol competition. The Thursday Rotary Club of Hickory's ongoing commitment of financial sup-

port continues to provide necessary educational assistance locally, and is consistent with the club's continued commitment to and financial support of local educational initiatives.

The Thursday Rotary Club of Hickory was founded in 1921 by Watt Shuford. In adherence to

Rotary's motto of “Service Above Self,” the club has a history of giving back to the community through its primary service avenue of education. For more information about The Thursday Rotary Club of Hickory, visit www.hickoryrotary.org.



Madison Yount, Rotary's Wilmer Jenkins Teacher of the Year!

A teacher at HHS for the past two years, Madison Yount graduated from HHS in 2010! She teaches English II (World Literature) and Advanced Placement Language and Composition. She is the advisor of Interact and the National English Honor Society. She is a graduate of Lenoir-Rhyne University (NC Teaching Fellows Scholarship) with a BA in English ('14) and a Master of Arts in Teaching ('15).

“As I heard the words that were written about these excellent teachers, I was in awe of them. I thought to myself, ‘I am in the presence of greatness,’” said Yount. “While I am so grateful for the plaque and the money I received for winning, they fall short to how rewarding and meaningful it was to hear the precious words that students, parents, and colleagues took the time to write about me.”



Congrats to each school's “Teacher of the Year” winner for the Rotary Wilmer Jenkins Award!

Outstanding!



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"If you try and achieve and go beyond, you'll be called white, like you're trying to be white. I don't see it that way. I see it as an opportunity you have so why not take it."

— Darian Abernathy, Hickory High School senior

EQUALITY & SUCCESS



ROBERT C. REED/HICKORY DAILY RECORD

Hickory High School students Jalil Thompson and Darian Abernathy are in Advance Placement classes along with International Baccalaureate student Shaye Brockenborough. All three will be graduating with honors this spring.

HPS is bridging minority student achievement gaps

BY JOHN BAILEY
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HICKORY

At the beginning of the Declaration of Independence is the statement, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

Two hundred and forty-one years later, the country is still on a journey to create equal opportunity for all its citizens.

For Hickory Public Schools Superintendent Robbie Adell, it's the reason he became an educator, and in March, he highlighted his desire to close the achievement gap among minority students in the district.

He presented his vision during the superintendent's advisory council meeting at Morning Star First Baptist Church in Hickory.

"We are suffering from the same epidemic that every school system across the country is suffering from, and that is the lack of achievement among African-American students," Adell said.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Hickory Public Schools Superintendent Robbie Adell recently made a presentation on the status of minority students in the district to the Greater Hickory Ministerial Alliance. Pictured are the Rev. David Roberts, Morning Star First Baptist Church; Angie Farris, Clinton Tabernacle AME Zion Church; the Rev. Marcus Williams, Greater Faith Missionary Baptist Church; the Rev. George Coates, Hartzell Memorial United Methodist Church; Adell; the Rev. Antonio Logan, Friendship Baptist Church; Mervin Sealy, president, Hickory Branch NAACP; Carolyn Thompson, Ridgeview Parish nurse; the Rev. Susan Walker and the Rev. Reggie Longcrier, Exodus Missionary Outreach Church.

The 2015-16 performance gap in grades six through eight, between white and black students, was 47.8 percentage points in reading and 43.5 percentage points in math, according to the presentation at the meeting.

More than 1 out of 4 black students were proficient on the end of grade reading assessment, while more than 7 of 10 white students were proficient. Less than 1 out of

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Gap

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5 black students were proficient on the end of grade math assessment, while more than 3 of 5 white students were proficient.

The numbers of proficiency were similar in the elementary and high school grades.

As the first African-American superintendent for Hickory Public Schools, Adell is an example himself of what students of any background can accomplish when they are given the chance.

"There are so few African-American superintendents in the state of North Carolina that are applying for positions, you just feel like, 'well, I'm going to give it a shot,'" Adell said. "But having this opportunity and researching and knowing what the district's needs are, fits what I feel was my whole purpose from day one since I started in this business in the 1980s."

Long road ahead

The superintendent understands closing this achievement gap will be measured in years, but knows how he wants the journey to begin.

The district's administration and teachers need to have a better understanding of the cultural differences between different student groups. Parents need to be more involved in their children's education, and minority students need to be encouraged to reach beyond the limits their socio-economic or ethnic backgrounds place upon them.

Adell wasn't surprised when he saw the gap in achievement among minority students in Hickory. He sees the issue dating back to the Jim Crow era as part of the lingering problem today throughout the south.

He's initiated a book study for all the district's principals — "The Dreamkeepers: Successful teachers of African-American children," by Gloria Ladson-Billings.

"We are spending a vast amount of time during our principal meetings talking about cultural relevance and what does that mean in regards to instruction," Adell said.

"We want kids to learn based on their life experiences," Adell said. "For instance, if you're teaching a unit on poetry, one of the things you could do as a teaching strategy is to use rap music. That's engaging a life-relevance for a lot of kids who are of color."

Something Morning Star First Baptist pastor David Roberts recommended to Adell during the advisory council meeting was to bring teachers on tours of the neighborhoods their students lived in.

"They could see the social environment the kids were really coming from," Roberts said. "It's easy to want to suspend them or expel them instead of dealing

with them because they were oblivious to what the kids were facing on a day-to-day basis, and how the success story was the fact the kid just made it to school at all."

Parent involvement

Adell said he's never met a parent who sends their child to school to fail. Unfortunately, the superintendent said his staff doesn't see as much parental involvement from the African-American community as they would like.

Adell saw the meeting at Morning Star First Baptist as a good example of how he would like to start bridging the gap between the district and parents.

"It is a partnership. We need to work with them, and we want them to work with us," Adell said.

Roberts, who was previously an educator in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools district, said he sees the problem of parent involvement as a lack of trust by the African-American community in the school system.

"Me being an outsider, it's obvious when you come here, the natives here don't really see the school system is for them," he said. "There is a status quo that's been in this community for a while and it's accepted. Nobody really expects to see a change."

Roberts likes Adell's outreach to church communities to help bridge this gap.

Churches are where African-Americans feel the most comfortable, so if you're going to try to reach the masses, the best way is through church communities, he said.

"When we came out of slavery, the only peace we had was when we went to church, and it was where we could talk about the things affecting us," Roberts said. "It was a safe haven, and to a large degree, that's still the case in the South."

Adell's goal is to make the school system more user friendly for all parents and students.

"The key to success in working with any ethnic group or any kid is connecting, having functional relationships with these parents and children," Adell said. "If we fail to do that, we're going to fail that child."

Inspiring students

Adell didn't come up middle class. Both of his parents worked. He was the first generation high school graduate in his family and the first college graduate. His parents were adamant about him and his brother finishing college.

"Fortunately for me and my brother, we had a teacher or two along the way who took a special interest in us and really served as a mentor and an encourager," he said.

The superintendent knows the biggest part of bridging the achievement gap is getting minority students to believe

they can succeed, but even for those who are pursuing higher academic success, it's still not easy feeling equal.

Hickory High senior Shayne Brockenborough said she is the only African-American student in the school's full International Baccalaureate (IB) program.

She said last year's senior class was all non-minorities. There are more minorities in individual IB courses, but in the full program, the numbers are far below the school's ethnic ratios.

"In my class this year it's just me and a Hispanic student, so it's just two of us out of 19 kids taking the full IB program," Brockenborough said.

"To add to this, the majority of the kids in my class are kind of on the higher economic side," she said. "We have seminars in our Theory of Knowledge, and what we do is talk about issues that go on in the world, and I can tell sometimes the kids in my class who are not minority, it's hard for them to relate to some of the things we say."

Follow senior Jalil Thompson doesn't feel minorities are well represented in Advance Placement classes either, especially in math and science classes. He plans on attending Clemson University to study chemical engineering.

"In my last science class, I was the only African-American male in there, and there were probably two other minorities there," Thompson said. "In my math class, I was the only African-American male and there was another female."

He said this fact makes him feel like he's not supposed to be in the class.

Another HHS senior Keyana Cardoza, said she also feels uncomfortable at times in those more advance classes.

"I want to challenge myself though because I know by taking these harder classes it's going to prepare me for college, so I just tell myself that I'm going to be better off in the future doing this," Cardoza said.

When asked why more minority students weren't signing up for more advance classes, HHS senior Darian Abernathy said it's all about stereotypes, about the image of it being "cooler to take the easy way out."

"If you try and achieve and go beyond, you'll be called white, like you're trying to be white," she said. "I don't see it that way. I see it as an opportunity you have so why not take it."

Shayne Brockenborough admitted to sometimes questioning why she joined the IB program, being one of the only minorities.

"But then I think that if I wasn't there, then there would be even less of an amount of minorities in the class, so by me being there I feel like I'm someone who could help make a change as far as encouraging other minorities," Brockenborough said.



Northview Artist Paints Springsteen Cover

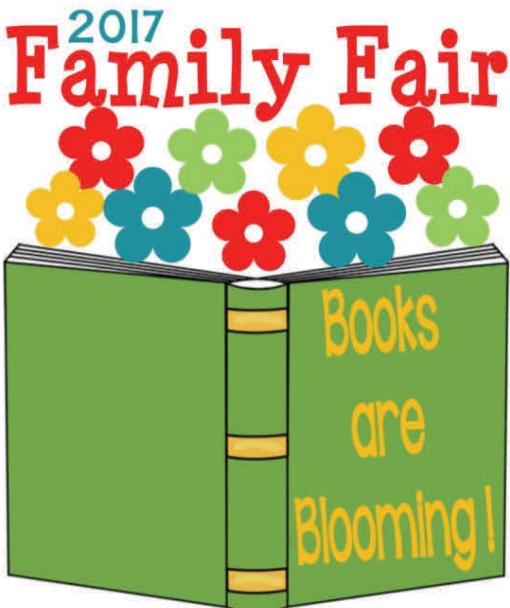
Abby Schueler wasn't around in 1984 when Bruce Springsteen's iconic album "Born in the U.S.A." hit the top of the charts. After all, Abby is currently an eighth grade student at Northview Middle School.

But her dad, Dan Schueler, was definitely around—catching every Springsteen concert within driving distance. He's attended at least 50 Springsteen concerts in his lifetime, so it's easy to guess the name of his favorite performing artist.

Abby knew she wanted to give her dad something special for his upcoming birthday. She didn't have the means to send her dad to a concert, but with the help of her school's visual arts teacher, Byron Jones, Abby discovered her hidden gift for painting.

With a paint brush in hand, Abby visualized the perfect gift for her dad, something to last well beyond a two-hour event. She was determined to paint an image of her dad's favorite album cover. And so she began.

Full story, click [here](#).



Celebrate early childhood with lots of **FREE FUN** for kids and families!

Saturday, May 13, 2017
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Partnership for Children
Early Childhood Resource Center
738 4th Street SW in Hickory

Games • Give-Aways • Activities • Book Bus • Balloons
Face Painting • Roaming Characters • Free Books

Sponsored by:



ATTENTION LONGVIEW & SOUTHWEST ELEMENTARY STAFF & PARENTS:

New starting and ending times for the new school year, 2017-2018 --

Longview Elementary School

Student hours: 8:00 until 2:30

Staff hours 7:20-3:00 or until all students have left the campus.

Southwest Elementary School

Student hours: 8:30 until 3:00

Staff hours: 7:50 until 3:20

HICKORY DAILY RECORD FRIDAY, MAY 5, 2017

Prep Roundup

Area students earn scholarships

NCHSAA awards Hickory, Newton-Conover players with Willie Bradshaw Memorial Scholarship

From staff reports

CHAPEL HILL – The North Carolina High School Athletic Association announced the winners of the Willie Bradshaw Memorial Endowed Scholarship on Wednesday, according to a press release.

Hickory High School's Jalil Khateeb Thompson and Newton-Conover High School's Genesis Noemi Zavala were announced winners of Region 7.

The scholarship gives \$750 to an outstanding African-American, American-Indian/Alaska Native and/or Asian Pacific Islander American, or Hispanic-American student-athletes on varsity teams at an NCHSAA-member school, according to the release.

The association named winners in eight regions spanning North Carolina, and out of the regional recipients, a male and female student-athlete will be selected as a state

scholarship recipients to receive an additional \$1,000.

Thompson carries a 4.62 weighted GPA and was a member of the football and track and field programs, according to the release.

He has been the offensive line captain for two years and is a member of the National Honor Society and BETA Club.

He also is a member of the Hickory City Council's

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SUBMITTED PHOTO:
The North Carolina High School Athletic Association awarded the Willie Bradshaw Memorial Endowed Scholarship to Hickory High School's Jalil Khateeb Thompson.



Prep

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"Youth City Council" and serves as a mentor through the City of Refuge Mentoring program.

Thompson plans to study chemical engineering at a four-year university in the fall.

HCAM Presents: Into the Woods!

Into the Woods is a modern twist on the beloved Brothers Grimm fairy tales in a musical format. The show follows the classic tales of Cindellera, Little Red Riding Hood, Jack and the Beanstalk, and Rapunzel — all tied together by an original story of a baker and his wife, their wish to begin a family, and their interaction with the witch who has put a curse on them.

**There will be only ONE showing to the public scheduled for May 12th at 6:30pm at the SALT Block.
Admission is \$5.**

Directed by Jackie Finley, the cast includes:

Narrator, Hanna Hamby;

Baker, Logan Sherrill

Baker's wife, Sink

Cinderella, Madison Melton

Cinderella's Mother, Tessa Rodriguez

Cinderella's Stepmother, Nakalyn Houck

Cinderella's Father, Chris Hayes

Florinda, Ashlyn Hartso

Lucinda, Rebecca Price

Cinderella's Prince, Johnny White

Jack, Abigail Smith

Jack's Mother, Ariel Rose

Milky-White, Kaden Horner and Zane Perry

Witch, Caylin Stinson

Little Red Ridinghood, Jaida Mingus

Granny, Hannah Surby

Mysterious Man, Brian Lee

Rapunzel, Kayla Lail

Rapunzel's Prince, Martaveous Stansford

Steward, Ja Vonta

Wolf, Meredith Hamby



Hickory High Quill Team Takes Top State Honors!

Congrats to the Quill Team of HHS for winning the state competition for the second year in a row! The team is led by English instructor, Chris Rice. The Quill competition is one of many academic competitions under the sponsorship of The North Carolina Association for Scholastic Activities (NCASA).

Team Win (the combination of all four scores):

1st Place in State as a school (2nd year in a row!)

Team: (L-R) Mishaela Robison, Kaitlyn Dang, Sophie Rice, and Claire McCrea. **Individual Wins:** Claire McCrea won 1st place for Argumentation; Sophie Rice won 1st place for Literary Analysis; Mishaela Robison won 1st place in Problem/Solution.



School Spotlight

(submitted by Vanessa Lail and Cindy Clark)

Grandview Middle School

Student Achievements

Congratulations to Annie Luong for winning the Hickory Public Library bookmark contest! Annie's artwork will be featured on bookmarks distributed at the library this year.



Helen Campbell and Molly Disharoon won first place at the state level in their respective divisions for the Elks Lodge Americanism essay contest. The topic was "Why is it Important to Vote?"

Broyhill Leaders



A group of Grandview eighth graders visited Lenoir Rhyne University on April 1st to work with LR's Broyhill leaders. Students spent an exciting morning working with university students, Dr. Craig Schreiber, and Dr. Katie Fisher on a variety of exciting leadership skills and team-building activities.

Lowe's Toolbox for Education Grant



We are grateful for the recent support we have received from Lowe's Home Improvement. Grandview received a \$54,500 Toolbox for Education grant to purchase interactive projectors. Volunteers from Lowe's of North Hickory assisted Focus Audio Video with installation over spring break.



Art students painting chairs for a school beautification project



Sixth graders building with Snap Circuits in the media center

